



# Department Updates

Barron County

Quarter 1 - 2015

## Aging & Disability Resource Center / Aging

### Leslie Fijalkiewicz, Director

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Older Americans Act, the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act and May has been proclaimed as ADRC Month! So, with all of this to celebrate, our agency will be hosting an event on May 28<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00 – 3:00. We will be taking over the first floor of the Government Center with our **“Get Into The Act”** event. We want everyone to know how much bang for the buck taxpayers in Barron County get for the federal, state and county dollars that partially fund the programs and services provided through the ADRC. There will also be a brief program, time TBA.

Our updated website went live the first week of April and we hope you will take the time to look it over and let us know your thoughts. You will note the website is actually for our entire ADRC region of Barron, Rusk and Washburn Counties. Check it out at [www.adrcconnections.org](http://www.adrcconnections.org). I happen to think it's the best ADRC website in the state, though admittedly I might be biased. Our Resource Coordinator, Kim Cobb (no relation to Randall Cobb!) has been

instrumental in this website overhaul!

The Governor's proposed budget is still of great concern with regard to the language about ADRC's. Many thanks to the County Board of Supervisors, Commission on Aging, ADRC governing board and the Health & Human Services Board for their unanimous support of a resolution that opposes the Governor's proposed ADRC changes among other things. These resolutions were sent to our legislative representatives, Joint Committee on Finance, and WCA. For more information on the resolution or aspects of the budget proposal that affect our customers, please go to our website.

In the past 6 months, our **AddLIFE Transit** service that provides transportation to seniors and persons with disabilities, has been running at full capacity. We have three vans on the road, Monday through Friday, with each van going 6-7 hours a day. This service helps folks who no longer drive get to the doctor, grocery store, bank, and anywhere they need to go in the county. Some folks use it several times a week, while oth-

ers only ride once or twice a month. In an effort to help as many folks as possible stay independent in their communities, our goal is to provide a little service to a lot of people. The success of this program is due to the great customer service provided by our drivers and dispatchers!

Another program that has grown significantly is **DAYBREAK**, our adult day program for persons with memory loss. **DAYBREAK** provides meaningful activity for those with memory loss while also giving their family caregivers a break. Currently, **DAYBREAK** operates three days a week, but we expect to add a fourth day within the next 3 months. Many things have contributed to the increased participation but much of the credit belongs to Peggy Schmidt, our Dementia Care Specialist.

I guess you can say this is a sign of the times...our population is aging and the staff are doing an amazing job keeping up with the changing demographics without the benefit of additional government funds.

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# Human Resources

Rachael Richie, HR Director

<b><u>New/Replacement Positions</u></b>				
<b><u>Position Title</u></b>	<b><u>Office/Department</u></b>	<b><u>Incumbent</u></b>	<b><u>Date Filled</u></b>	<b><u>New/Replacement</u></b>
Social Worker	Health & Human Services	Brenda Baribeau	3/30/15	Replacement
Social Worker	Health & Human Services	Charity Moe	3/30/15	Replacement
Social Worker	Health & Human Services	Juanita Rausch	4/20/15	Replacement
Non-Metallic Mining / Conservation Technician	Land Services	Bronson Thalacker	5/1/15	Replacement
Economic Support Specialist	Health & Human Services	Recruiting		Replacement
Office Assistant (PT)	Child Support	Recruiting		Replacement

## **Wellness Team Update:**

- 13 participated in the February Hydration Challenge
- 24 participated in the March / April Minutes in Motion Challenge
- 9 enrolled in the Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) worksite group

## County Clerk

### **DeeAnn Cook, County Clerk**

The April 7, 2015 Spring Election went smoothly and the Municipal Clerks and Poll Workers did their usual good job. Special thanks to Vonnie Ritchie, Jeff and Pam French and Julie Henningsen who volunteer their time and come in to help Jessica and I take in election results. Also, thanks to Jeff Sirek who updated our results to the website remotely so they could be displayed

faster. There were several contested municipal and school board races in addition to the Justice of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals District #3 and state referenda question. Voter turnout in Barron County was typical for a spring election with 21.8% of registered voters and 15.8% of eligible voters going to the polls.

Change is coming to the way we issue marriage licenses. Vital Records will be

transitioning to an on-line marriage license application system late this spring. Couples will still be required to apply in person at the County Clerk's office with the same required documents but we will log into their SVRIS system to complete the application. Register of Deeds office will then complete the process in that system once the marriage has taken place and the officiant files the document. Training is being provided by Vital Records in May.

## UW Extension

### **Mary Pardee, 4H Youth Development Educator**

The UW-Extension office has a few new faces. Lori Baltrusis is a 25% 4-H Program Advisor on a temporary basis. She is working as a jobshare with Mary Pardee, the 4-H Youth Development Educator. Mary has a 25% temporary reassignment of duties and is working as a regional associate for the North Central Region of UW-Extension. In addition to her new 4-H title, Lori is the Family Living agent in Sawyer County.

Andrea Gardner will be starting as the WNEP (Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program) Educator in late April. Andrea will be working with Kathy Splett, WNEP

Coordinator. She will provide nutrition education to school children and other clients, including WIC recipients, 4-H members and more. Topics include MyPlate nutrition information, making wise food choices, food safety and smart snacking. WNEP is funded by federal dollars through SNAP-Ed, and helps limited resource families and individuals choose healthful diets, prepare healthful food and become more food secure by spending their food dollars wisely.

UW-Extension's Americorp VISTA volunteer, Joel McReynolds, has also been working on food security issues. Part of his needs assessment has led him to conduct

an online survey about community gardens. The purpose of the survey is to determine whether a community garden in the City of Barron would be embraced and supported with interest. Please consider taking this survey, whether you are a resident of Barron or not. The survey will take less than five minutes to complete, and can be found at the UW-Extension Barron County website at <http://barron.uwex.edu>. If it is found that people are interested in a community garden, UW-Extension will continue developing the project. If you are unable to complete the survey online, UW-Extension can supply you with a paper version.

# Highway Department

## Mark Servi, Highway Commissioner

With the apparent early end to winter, the Highway Department has transitioned to the typical spring maintenance work. Spring is pot hole season, and our staff is almost daily filling them in. Last summer, we purchased a spray patching machine that provides a more lasting patch than the methods we typically used. We have used it this spring with good results. We have also been crack filling on CTH A west of Prairie Farm in preparation of chip sealing that section this summer. The crew also has been pulling up shoulders, and getting the asphalt plant ready for what will be a very busy season. We have also started crushing material for the asphalt plant.

We have several construction projects that will be starting soon:

CTH SS from 12 ¾ Avenue to 23<sup>rd</sup> Street (between Cameron and Chetek) will begin April 21. The project consists of milling off the existing asphalt surface and placing a new asphalt surface. The project should be completed by Memorial Day. The work is being performed by our crew.

CTH O from the Red Cedar River to 19<sup>th</sup> Street (on the south side of the City of Rice Lake) will be started in early May. The project consists of milling the existing surface and placing a new asphalt surface. The work will be staged, with lane closures east of USH 53. The section west of USH 53 (in front of Wal-Mart) will be worked on during night time road closures, and there will be a signed detour route. That section of CTH O is too narrow to accommodate traffic during construction. The project does not include any work on the round-a-bouts at the CTH O / USH 53 intersection as that section is owned by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and will be done in conjunction with work on USH 48 that is currently scheduled for 2016. We have contracted with Monarch Construction to perform this project, and it should be completed before the Memorial Day weekend.

CTH P from USH 8 to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue will be starting in late April. This is a sand haul route project, and consists of widening the existing roadway and re-grading the ditches for drainage. A-1 Excavating from Bloomer is performing the grading work and the Highway Department will be performing the paving portion of the project.

There will be times when sections of CTH P will be closed when culverts are installed. There is also a bridge on the south end of the project that will be replaced, and CTH P will be closed for that work, also. The project will take the entire construction season to complete as it is a complicated project with many stages of construction.

Please be aware that our crews and others will be working to construct and maintain your county highway system this summer. When you are in a work zone, please put the cell phone down, and keep your focus on the road. It is our goal to have accident free work zones, and the only way we can accomplish that is if we all pay attention to our surroundings. Let's work together to insure that we can all go home at the end of the work day.



## Committee Update

### Jeff French, County Administrator

#### LCC/Extension:

January meeting established 2014 Wildlife Damage 2014 Crop prices at \$4.30 for corn and \$12.03 for soybeans.

The Committee was updated in February on the Chetek Chain of Lakes, Lake District formation and the Committee's and County Board's roles and responsibilities. Also, staff continues to work with the Chetek Lake Association regarding this process.

#### Property Committee:

February meeting, denied request from the City of Barron to sell 410 East LaSalle Ave., building to the City. This decision is based on several factors, the building is currently being rented to the State of Wis., Public Defenders, Work Force Resource and WITC and there is no tax benefit by selling to the City.

All other actions of this Committee have been referred to the Executive Committee and ultimately to the full Board.

#### Executive:

Allowed a \$2,200 carryover of 2014 budgeted dollars to 2015 for disaster/mass fatality planning and compliance with the destruction of old records.

Approved out of State travel for Sheriff's Dept employee to Anniston, Alabama for FEMA training, most costs associated with this training are paid for by FEMA.

#### Solid Waste Board:

Work on the updated air permit continues and essentially, we are in the last stages of the testing process which will be followed by a public hearing hopefully to be scheduled in May or June.

The Committee has discussed a long-term feasibility study with the possible inclusion of other Counties and the meeting scheduled, for April 14<sup>th</sup>, has been postponed until August.

The SWB requested a loan of \$1.1M from the General Fund for Capital Improvements at the WTE plant. This request was rejected by the Executive Committee with staff working on the most essential needs for Capital Improvement and in April or May staff will be presenting a request for a loan from the General Fund for \$532,970. In connection with the G/F Loan, Capital needs, and long-term planning, staff has been assisted by Ehlers and Associates in this process and the setting of tipping fee price increase in the future.

# Corporation Counsel / Child Support Agency

**John Muench, Corporation Counsel /  
Child Support Director**

## Corporation Counsel

Over the next 10 weeks the Corporation Counsel's Office will be sharing an intern with the District Attorney's Office and the Child Support Agency. The intern will be devoting 2 or 3 days per week over the 10 week time period and logging 180 hours as part of the internship requirement for a paralegal program course of study. Spending time in each of the three offices will provide a diverse experience and cover multiple program elements.

## Child Support

As noted in the Corporation Counsel's update the Child Support Agency will be sharing a paralegal intern 2 or 3 days per week over the next 10 weeks. To this point the intern has had an opportunity to prepare child support calendars, draft court orders, review and prep court files before hearings, attend hearings and take part in a client interview.

The Child Support Agency's performance numbers continue to remain solid moving into the spring season where tax refunds and the start-up of seasonal jobs should continue the upward tick on collection rates. The performance numbers are cumulative each year from October 1st to September 30<sup>th</sup>, and track the following areas:

case load; court order rate; paternity establishment; current support collection rate; arrears collection rate and health insurance.

Child Support Director Muench will be attending the Director's Dialog in April which is hosted annually by the Bureau of Child Support. The gathering of all the Child Support Agency's in the state provides training, updates on policy and the presentation of the 2014 Achievement Awards.

## Treasurer's Office

**Yvonne Ritchie, Treasurer**

### Tax Collections

<b>2014 Tax Year Detail</b>	<b>Total Tax Roll</b>	<b>State &amp; County Share</b>
Total Tax Roll	\$80,401,592.87	\$20,077,955.94
School Credit	-5,725,788.99	-1,462,404.29
Lottery & Gaming Credit	-1,611,262.64	- 400,823.05
First Dollar Credit	-1,622,794.52	- 407,364.51
Taxes after Credits	\$71,441,746.72	\$17,807,364.09
Dec 2014 & Jan 2015 Collections	-50,192,565.50	-12,633,148.34
Balance February 2015	\$21,249,181.22	\$ 5,174,215.75

<b>Prior Years Delinquent Taxes</b>	<b>2002-2013 Tax</b>
January 1, 2015	\$ 1,281,823.86
January Collections	-87,670.36
February Collections	-71,087.97
March Collections	-38,153.85
Unpaid Balance April 1, 2015	\$1,084,911.68

Int & Pen Collected Jan/Feb/Mar      \$ 81,701.71

### Tax Deed

The Tax Deed process on properties with delinquent 2011 taxes has begun. The final day to pay the 2011 tax and stop this process is June 12, 2015. The list is on the County website although some parcels have been paid. After this deadline and title is transferred to Barron County, the owners can repurchase their property within 30 days by paying all taxes including interest, penalty, and tax deed fees.

### Camping Reservations

All Barron County camp sites and picnic shelters are reserved online through the county website with a credit card. This is the second year for this process and we have collected \$17,925 as of April 10, 2015, for this year's camping season. We are in the process of updating the camping materials for the caretakers. Our annual meeting for the caretakers is set for April 24<sup>th</sup>.

# Medical Examiner

Mary Ricci, Medical Examiner

## 2015 First Quarter Report with Comparisons

MONTH	TOTAL CASES	M	F	NATURAL	Suicide Homicide	ACCIDENT	PND	ATPSY	CRM	DC	On Site INV	NOTES
2015 JAN	33	12	21	29	S = 1	Pdstrn = 1 Fall = 1	1	2 = C 1 = F	21	10	*9 = RL 3 MR = 4 JW = 2 AP = 1	Pedestrian Accident *MR & JW worked 1 case together
FEB	25	14	11	23	0	Aspir = 1 Farm = 1	0	1 = C	22	6	7 = MR 4 AP = 2 JW = 1	
MAR	28	13	15	28	0	0	0	0	20	5	5 = MR 4 JW = 1	
2015 Totals	86	39	47	80	1	4	1	4	63	21	Mary = 12 Ryan = 3 Allen = 3 Jeff = 4	
2014 Jan-Mar Totals	94								59	21		
2013 Jan-Mar Totals	103								83	22		
2012 Jan-Mar Totals	91								67	21		
2011 Jan-Mar Totals	88								68	23		

Legend: PND = Pending; Autopsy = C-Clinical, F-Forensic; CRM = Cremation; DC = Death Certificate

## Work to Begin on CTH SS Cameron to Chetek

### Press Release

Work on CTH SS, south of Cameron, from 12 3/4 Avenue south to 23rd Street will begin on Tuesday, April 21, 2015.

This project will consist of milling, paving, shouldering and pavement marking. Traffic will be controlled through the used of a flagged work zone. Travelers should expect delays and are encouraged to find alternate routes.

Depending upon the weather conditions this spring, it is anticipated that this project will be completed by Memorial Day weekend.

Mark Servi, Highway Commission (4/13/15)